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# THANKSGIVING Dinner

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## Serve It Safely

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# Holiday Meals— Things To Consider

*Roast Turkey with Stuffing  
Cranberry Sauce  
Mashed Potatoes  
Green Beans  
Scalloped Oysters  
Rolls—Butter  
Pumpkin Pie*

The dining room table may seat only 6 or 8, but somehow, families find ways to stretch the food and the table space at Thanksgiving. That's part of the tradition!

Entertaining a large family gathering is fun, but it needs to be done safely, too. Roast turkey—the favorite Thanksgiving entree—is a perishable food. Always thaw a frozen turkey in the refrigerator. If you must thaw it more quickly, put it in a waterproof plastic bag, seal tightly, and defrost in cold water. Thawing frozen poultry at room temperature gives bacteria a chance to grow. This is especially true with large frozen turkeys because of the long time it takes them to thaw completely.

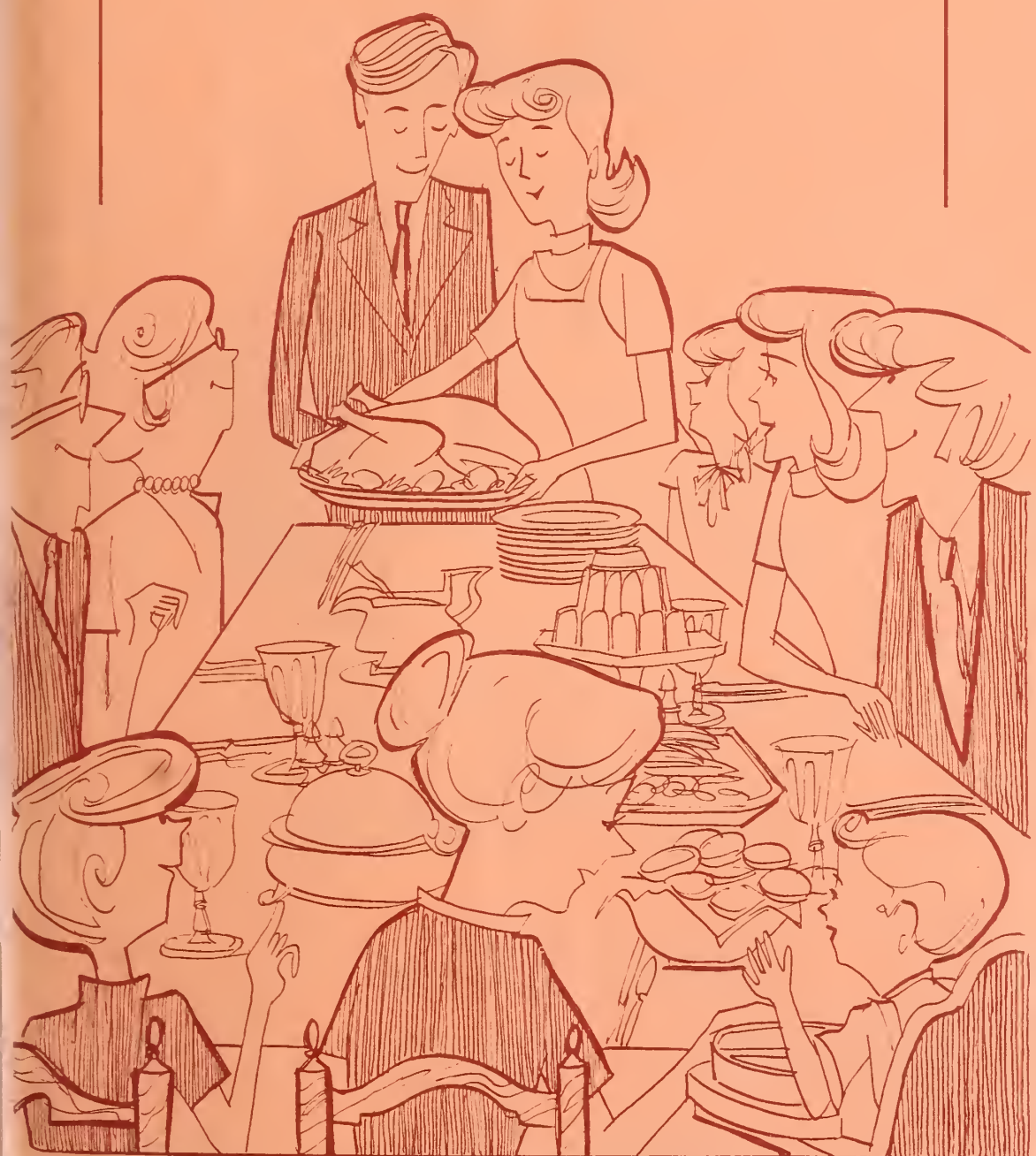
Cook turkey thoroughly, to an

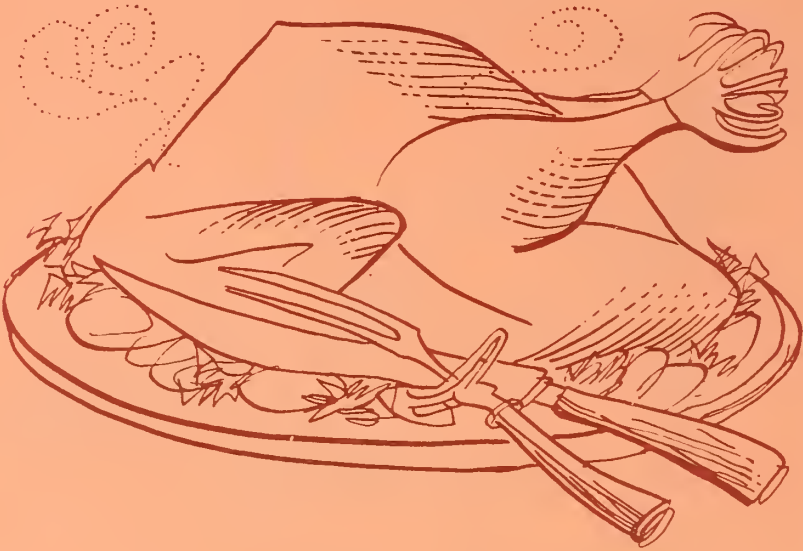


internal temperature of 180-190° F. Never partially cook it and finish cooking later. Bacteria can survive in partially cooked poultry.

Cook turkey stuffing completely. It's safest to cook it separately from the turkey, because stuffing inside a warm turkey is a breeding place for bacteria. It's also easier to serve a crowd when the stuffing is cooked separately. If you must cook stuffing inside the turkey, cook until the meat thermometer inserted into the stuffing reaches at least 165° F. Never stuff turkey the night before cooking.

Do not thaw commercially frozen stuffed poultry before baking. Put it directly into the oven.





Refrigerate turkey leftovers immediately. Remove all stuffing; store separately.

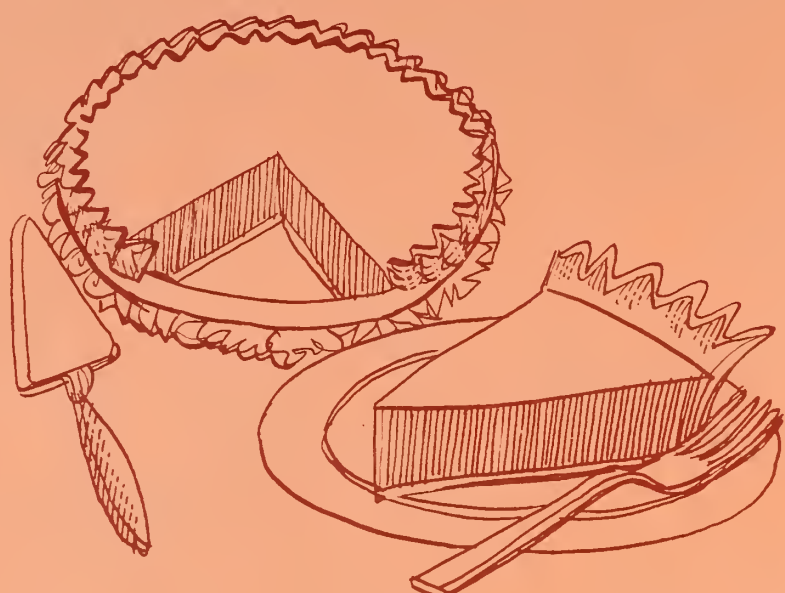
Scalloped oysters—another holiday favorite in some households—are also highly perishable. Keep them refrigerated or frozen until just before cooking. In serving, keep them HOT (above 140° F). Serve quickly; refrigerate leftovers immediately.

Can you prepare and serve the food to avoid foodborne illness? Your family may enjoy meals every day without problems, but on holidays when large groups get together, the types and larger quantities of foods present different problems. You may not have enough refrigerator space.

Bacteria can cause food poisoning. All they need to grow is the right combination of time, temperature, and moisture.

Foodborne illness can cause diarrhea, vomiting, stomach cramps, and other unpleasant symptoms which can last for several hours or even days. With young children and elderly people, the results can be more severe. Often, people mistake foodborne illness for a simple “bug” or virus. The real cause





may be food that was not properly handled, prepared, or served. This can be prevented.

Can perishable foods such as cream pies, seafoods, and dishes made with eggs, fish, meat, and poultry be kept COLD (below 40° F)? Do not let these foods stand at room temperature more than 2 hours.

Can perishable foods such as seafood, poultry, and cooked meats be kept HOT (above 140° F)? Bacteria grow best in lukewarm foods. Never let these foods stand at room temperature more than 2 hours.

Holiday meals are fun but need careful planning. How many people can you safely serve? And, how much time will it take to prepare the food? Don't try to feed more people than you can handle. Consider the size and quantity of the cooking equipment you have, your supply of eating utensils and dishes. Figure out how much refrigerator space you'll need to store foods.



# **Holiday Meals Are Fun**

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## **Make Them Safe**



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Cooperative Extension Work: United States Department of  
Agriculture and State Land-Grant Universities Cooperating.  
Issued November 1974

